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Aurōra (Latin: [aʊ̯ˈroːraː]) is the Latin word for dawn, and the goddess of dawn in Roman mythology and Latin poetry. Like Greek *Eos* and *Rigvedic Ushas*, *Aurora* continues the name of an earlier Indo-European dawn goddess, *Hausos*.

Name [edit]

Aurōra stems from Proto-Italic **ausōs*, and ultimately from Proto-Indo-European **hₓéusōs*, the "dawn" conceived as divine entity. It has cognates in the goddesses Ēōs, Uṣas, Aušrinė, Auseklis and Éostre.[2][3]

Roman mythology [edit]

In Roman mythology, Aurōra renews herself every morning and flies across the sky, announcing the arrival of the Sun. Her parentage was flexible: for Ovid, she could equally be *Pallantis*, signifying the daughter of Pallas,[4] or the daughter of Hyperion.[5] She has two siblings, a brother (Sol, the Sun) and a sister (Luna, the Moon). Roman writers rarely imitated Hesiod and later Greek poets by naming Aurōra as the mother of the Anemoi (the Winds), who were the offspring of Astraeus, the father of the stars.

Aurōra appears most often in sexual poetry with one of her mortal lovers. A myth taken from the Greek by Roman poets tells that one of her lovers was the prince of Troy, Tithonus. Tithonus was a mortal, and would therefore age and die. Wanting to be with her lover for all eternity, Aurōra asked Jupiter to grant immortality to Tithonus. Jupiter granted her wish, but she failed to ask for eternal youth to accompany his immortality, and he continued to age, eventually becoming forever old. Aurōra turned him into a cicada.

Mention in literature and music [edit]

Ovid's *Heroides* (16.201-202), Paris names his well-known family members, among which Aurōra's lover as follows:

> A Phrygian was the husband of Aurora, yet she, the goddess who appoints the last road of night, carried him away

Virgil mentions in the fourth book of his *Aeneid*:[6]

> Aurora now had left her saffron bed,
> And beams of early light the heav'ns o'erspread

Rutilius Claudius Namatianus mentions in his 5th century poem *De reditu suo*:[7]

> Saffron Aurora had brought forward
> her fair-weather team: the breeze
> offshore tells us to haul the sail-yards up.

Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* (I.i), Montague says of his lovesick son Romeo:

> But all so soon as the all-cheering sun
> Should in the furthest east begin to draw
> The shady curtains from Aurora's bed,
> Away from the light steals home my heavy son...

In traditional Irish folk songs, such as "Lord Courtown":

> One day I was a-musing down by the
> Courtown banks
> The sun shone bright and clearly, bold
> Neptune played a prank...
> There was Flora at the helm and
> Aurora to the stern
> And all their gallant fine seamen, their
> course for to steer on.

In the poem "Let me not mar that perfect Dream" by Emily Dickinson:

> Let me not mar that perfect Dream
> By an Auroral stain
> But so adjust my daily Night
> That it will come again.

In "On Imagination" by Phillis Wheatley:

> From Tithon's bed now might Aurora
> rise,
> Her cheeks all glowing with celestial
> dies,
> While a pure stream of light o'erflows
> the skies.

In the poem "Tithonus" by Alfred, Lord Tennyson,[8] Aurōra is described thus:

> Once more the old mysterious glimmer steals
> From thy pure brows, and from thy shoulders pure,
> And bosom beating with a heart renewed,
> Thy cheek begins to redden through the gloom,
> Thy sweet eyes brighten slowly close to mine,
> Ere yet they blind the stars, and the wild team
> Which love thee, yearning for thy yoke, arise,
> And shake the darkness from their loosened manes,
> And beat the twilight into flakes of fire

In singer-songwriter Björk's *Vespertine* track, Aurōra is described as

> Aurora
> Goddess sparkle
> A mountain shade suggests your shape
>
> I tumble down on my knees
> Fill my mouth with snow
> The way it melts
> I wish to melt into you

In Chapter 8 of Charlotte Brontë's *Villette*, Madame Beck fires her old Governess first thing in the morning and is described by the narrator, Lucy Snowe: *All this, I say, was done between the moment of Madame Beck's issuing like Aurōra from her chamber, and that in which she coolly sat down to pour out her first cup of coffee.*

The 20th-century Polish poet Zbigniew Herbert wrote about Aurōra's grandchildren. In his poem they are ugly, even though they will grow to be beautiful ("Kwestia Smaku").

The first and strongest of the 50 Spacer worlds in *The Caves of Steel* and subsequent novels by Isaac Asimov is named after the goddess Aurora. Its capital city is Eos.

Depiction in art [edit]

- *Aurōra*, fresco by Guido Reni (1614) in Palazzo Pallavicini-Rospigliosi, Rome
- Aurora (Artemisia Gentileschi) (c.1625-1627)
- *Aurōra* by Guercino (1591–1666)
- *The Countess de Brac as Aurōra* by Jean-Marc Nattier (1685–1766)
- *Aurōra e Titone* by Francesco de Mura (1696–1782)
- *Aurōra and Cephalus*, by Anne-Louis Girodet de Roussy-Trioson (1767–1824)
- *The Gates of Dawn* by Herbert James Draper (1863–1920)
- *Aurōra and Cephalus* by Pierre-Narcisse Guérin (1774–1833)
- *Aurōra* by Odilon Redon (1840 – 1916).
- *Aurore* by Denys Puech (1854 – 1942).

See also [edit]

- Dawn goddess
- Eos
- List of solar deities
- Mater Matuta
- Mermon (mythology)
- Zorya

References [edit]

1. ^ a b Witzel, Michael (2005). *Vala and Iwato: The Myth of the Hidden Sun in India, Japan, and beyond* (PDF).
2. ^ Mallory, J. P.; Adams, D. Q. (2006-08-24). *The Oxford Introduction to Proto-Indo-European and the Proto-Indo-European World*. OUP Oxford. p. 409. ISBN 9780199287918.
3. ^ *Fasti* v.159; also Hyginus, Preface to *Fabulae*.
4. ^ The Aeneid by Virgil - Translated by John Dryden
5. ^ LacusCurtius • Rutilius Namatianus — A Voyage Home to Gaul
6. ^ D. A. Harris, *Tennyson and personification: the rhetoric of "Tithonus"*, 1986.

External links [edit]

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Look up *Aurora* in Wiktionary, the free dictionary.
- The Warburg Institute Iconographic Database (images of Aurora)
- "Aurora, the Roman goddess of the dawn". *Encyclopædia Britannica* (11th ed.). 1911.
- "Aurora, the goddess of the morning". *The American Cyclopædia*. 1879.

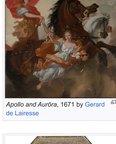
Aurora
Personification of dawn

L'Aurore by William-Adolphe Bouguereau (1881)

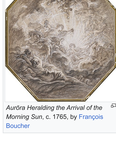
Abode	Sky
Symbol	Chariot, saffron, cicada
Genealogy	
Siblings	Sol and Luna
Consort	Astraeus, Tithonus
Children	Anemoi
Equivalents	
Greek	Eos
Hindu	Ushas
Indo-European	Hausós
Slavic	Zorya
Japanese	Ame-no-Uzume[1]
Nurisnani	Disani[1]

Aurōra and Cephalus, 1733, by François Boucher

Aurōra Taking Leave of Tithonus 1704, by Francesco Solimena



Apollo and Aurōra, 1671 by Gerard de Lairesse



Aurōra Heralding the Arrival of the Morning Sun, c. 1765, by François Boucher

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